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NEWS RELEASE

3727 Government Street, Alexandria, Louisiana 71302
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USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT PRESENTS \$8.5 MILLION IN FUNDING FOR FOUR PROJECTS IN LOUISIANA

BATON ROUGE, July 28, 2004 – USDA Rural Utilities Service Administrator Hilda Gay Legg traveled to Louisiana from Washington, DC, to join State Director Michael B. Taylor in presenting \$8.5 million in USDA Rural Development funding to four communities.

In a ceremony in Baton Rouge, funds were presented to:

Town of St. Francisville—\$450,000 loan—USDA Rural Development funds will be used to purchase a new fire engine for the Town of St. Francisville, Louisiana. The purchase of this new fire engine will enable St. Francisville to provide fire protection for the town and surrounding rural areas. As a result of this USDA Rural Development funding, residents of St. Francisville will have access to first responder services.

West Feliciana Parish Police Jury—\$665,000 loan and \$129,000 grant—USDA Rural Development funds will be used to upgrade an existing sewer collection and treatment plant in West Feliciana Parish. Because of state-imposed environmental restrictions, this sewer system has been unable to add additional users. As a result of this USDA Rural Development funding, this system will be upgraded to allow 26 additional users—bringing the total number of customers to 212.

In a ceremony in St. Martin Parish, funds were presented to:

Waterworks District 5 of St. Martin Parish—\$2,566,000 loan and \$1,570,370 grant—USDA Rural Development funds will be used for construction of a new water system in the northeast area of St. Martin Parish. The new system will include 89,000 feet of water line, 41 fire hydrants, a new water well and test well, and associated equipment and land. As a result of this USDA Rural Development funding, rural residents of St. Martin Parish will have access to clean, safe drinking water—as well as enhanced fire protection services.

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7/28/04

Southeast Waterworks District 2 of Vermilion Parish—\$2,717,000 loan and \$440,230 grant—USDA Rural Development funds will be used to construct approximately 37.7 miles of water distribution lines to serve an additional 437 customers in rural Vermilion Parish. Also, a new 200,000-gallon storage tank and associated equipment will be installed which will increase the capacity of the water well. As a result of this USDA Rural Development funding, an additional 437 rural residents of Vermilion Parish will have access to clean, safe drinking water.

USDA Rural Development provides a full range of rural development credit services in rural Louisiana. The Louisiana Rural Development State Office is located at 3727 Government Street, Alexandria, Louisiana 71302, and the telephone number is (318) 473-7921. There are four area offices located throughout the state to serve Louisiana residents. Further information on USDA Rural Development's loan and grant programs can be obtained by visiting Rural Development's web site at: <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

USDA Rural Development is an equal opportunity lender, provider, and employer. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Washington, DC 20250-9140.

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